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AFRICAN REMOTE SENSING COUNCIL

Third Meeting of the Conference
of Plenipotentiaires

Barako, Mali, 3 - 5 March 1981

R E P O R T

of the

Third Meeting of the Conference of
Plenipotentiaries

M81-1796

INTRODUCTION

1. The African Remote Sensing Council held its third meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries at Bamako, the Republic of Mali, from 3 to 5 March 1981 under the chairmanship of H.E. Mr. Djibril Diallo, the Honourable Minister of Transport and Public Works of Mali.

2. This was a maiden meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the ARSC to be held at the headquarters of the Council since the inauguration of the ARS programme in February 1975.

3. Two of the subsidiary organs of the Council met. The Regional Management Committee of the CRTO held its meeting on 1st March 1981, and for lack of a quorum, the Regional Management Committee of the Nairobi Regional Centre met informally on 4 March 1981. The summary records of these meetings are attached as annexes to this report (Annexes I and II).

I. OPENING OF THE MEETING (Agenda item 1)

4. H.E. Colonel Youssouf Traore, Secretary of Information and Culture of the Central Executive Bureau of the UDPM, on behalf of the Head of State of Mali, declared the meeting open. Their Excellencies Mr. Djibril Diallo, Minister of Transports and Public Works of Mali and 1st Vice-President of the Council, Professor Adebayo Adedeji, United Nations Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa, and Captain Kani Gaston Gnoumou, Minister of Public Works, Transport and Urbanization of Upper Volta and President of the Council, also addressed the Conference.

5. In his opening address, the Honourable Minister of Transport and Public Works of Mali, Mr. Djibril Diallo welcomed the delegates, representatives of donor countries and observers on behalf of the Government of the Republic of Mali.

Mr. Diallo emphasized the importance of remote sensing in resource development and referred to the socio-economic implications of the technology of remote sensing and the effects this would have on the deliberations of member States of the African Remote Sensing Council.

Mr. Diallo concluded by expressing their appreciation and delight of the Government of Mali in becoming a permanent host country for this and future African Remote Sensing Conferences. He re-assured the participants of the Malian Government's continuing interest in remote sensing activities and expressed his good wishes for the apparent success of the African Remote Sensing Council programme.

6. Professor Adebayo Adedeji in his statement joined the Malian Minister of Transports and Public Works in welcoming the participants to the meeting. He stressed the significance of the Conference as a maiden meeting to be held at the Council's headquarters since the inception of the ARS programme.

Professor Adedeji expressed his deep gratitude to the Government and people of the Republic of Mali for their support for the ARS programme and for their active part in the work of the Regional Management Committee of the Ouagadougou Centre (CRTO).

He thanked the group of experts for their collective endeavours in giving Africa the best equipment and instrument which will meet its remote sensing needs.

Tracing briefly the history of the ARS programme Prof. Adedeji said that in spite of its slow take-off the dream of the member States, expressed in the Conference of Ministers' resolution 280 (XII) of Febriary 1975, was gradually being realized as regards the establishment of ground receiving and processing stations as well as trainer and user-assistance centres, thereby ensuring that all the advantages of remote sensing technology are made accessible to all ECA member States. He therefore appealed to all member States to demonstrate practically their seriousness of purpose through their substantial material, moral, political and financial support for the programme.

Concluding his statement, Professor Adedeji informed the Council of the recently concluded technical co-operation arrangement between ECA and FAO for support for the Council and other relevant remote sensing activities in Africa and went on to thank the donor countries and the specialized agencies co-operating technically with the ECA and the various organs of the Council in implementing the ARS programme.

7. The Minister of Public Works, Transports and Urbanization of the Republic of Upper Volta, H.E. Captain Kani G. Gnoumou, also made an opening statement in his capacity as the President of the Provisional Bureau of the Council. He expressed appreciation to the Government and people of Mali and joined the two former speakers in welcoming the delegates. He referred to the preceding meetings that led to the establishment of remote sensing centres in Africa and noted that despite the inherent difficulties in the establishment of these centres significant results have been achieved.

Captain Gnoumou praised ECA for its role in providing guidance for the steady progress of the ARS programme and expressed his gratitude to the donor countries and called for solidarity and co-operation among participating African countries. Captain Gnoumou warned African States against national selfishness and pleaded for constructive togetherness in the pursuance of the goals of the ARSC. He stressed the importance of training for proper

achievement of the objectives of the programme. He said further that the development strategy adopted by the African States at the Lagos Summit emphasizes the importance of solidarity and co-operation among member States which should serve as a basis for technical co-operation that is envisaged in the African Remote Sensing programme.

Lastly, Captain Gnoumou emphasized the need for self-reliance in bringing to fruition the noble objectives of the ARS programme. Full texts of the statements are annexed to this report (Annexes III, IV and V).

II. ATTENDANCE

8. Representatives of the following member States attended the meeting:

- Countries, members of the ARSC: Benin, Egypt, Guinea, Kenya, Mali, Mauritania, Niger, Senegal, Upper Volta and Zaire.

- Countries participating in observer status: Algeria, Gabon, Libya, Nigeria and Rwanda.

9. Representatives of the following centres in remote sensing also attended the meeting: the Regional Remote Sensing Centre, Ouagadougou, (CRTO), the Regional Cartographic Centre and Remote Sensing Facility (RRSF), Nairobi, the ERTS-Zaire, Kinshasa, and the Remote Sensing Centre, Cairo.

10. Representatives of the following donor countries, specialized agencies, African intergovernmental organizations attended the meeting: Canada, France, Federal Republic of Germany, Japan, the United States of America, the European Space Agency, UNDP, UNESCO, OCLALAV (Dakar), Liptako-Gourma and the African Association of Cartography.

A list of the participants is annexed to this report (Annex VI).

III. ELECTION OF THE BUREAU OF THE CONFERENCE (Agenda item 2)

11. The meeting elected the following countries to the offices indicated below for a term of two years in accordance with Article VI/2 of the Constitution of the ARS Council:

President	:	Mali
Ist Vice-President:		Egypt
2nd Vice-President:		Niger
3rd Vice-President:		Kenya

12. The ECA secretariat was unanimously requested to continue performing the functions of the secretariat of the Council until the appointment of its Secretary-General.

IV. ADOPTION OF THE AGENDA (Agenda item 3)

13. The meeting discussed the provisional agenda and subsequently adopted the following:

1. Official opening of the meeting
2. Election of the Bureau of the Conference
3. Adoption of the agenda
4. Report on the activities of the ARSC Regional Management Committees and the Regional Centres since the second meeting
5. Report on the state of members' contributions
6. Appointment of the ARSC Secretary-General
7. Election of the Governing Board
8. Establishment of the Technical Advisory Committee
9. Statement by donor countries, United Nations agencies and African intergovernmental organizations
10. Signing of the Constitution by the African States which have not yet done so
11. Any other business
12. Date and venue of the fourth meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries
13. Adoption of the report
14. Closure of the meeting

V. A. REPORT OF THE ACTIVITIES OF THE REGIONAL MANAGEMENT COMMITTEES AND THE REGIONAL CENTRES SINCE THE SECOND MEETING (Agenda item 4)

14. The chairmen of the regional management committees of the Ouagadougou and Nairobi Remote Sensing Centres gave accounts of their activities since the second meeting of the Council held in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, in August 1980. The report of these two regional management committees are annexed to this report (Annexes VII and VIII).

15. Among the other activities they reported upon were their endeavours in the field of training and the organization of short courses in some areas of application of remote sensing techniques to natural resources inventory, exploration and control of the environment.

16. In order to ensure that the best type of remote sensing education is given to the trainees, guarantee the quality of such trainings and avoid unnecessary duplication of training activities, the Conference set up a Committee of experts to look into the harmonization of these activities. The composition of the Committee is as follows:

The Director/Drectors-General of the Remote Sensing Centres, and
The Technical experts of the ECA

17. The report of the Committee will be submitted to the Technical Advisory Committee of the Council for a review and its recommendations upon the report made available to the Council at its next meeting.

18. The Conference noted that the Kinshasa (ERTS-Zaire) and the Cairo centres were yet to be regionalized, and therefore directed that the Government of Egypt and the Economic Commission for Africa should work out programmes particularly for the regionalization of the Cairo Centre.

19. The Economic Commission for Africa was again requested to make efforts to undertake sensitization missions to the countries of member States yet to adhere to the Constitution of the ARSC with a view to their becoming members of the Council at an early date.

B. REPORT ON THE STATE OF MEMBERS' CONTRIBUTIONS (Agenda item 5)

20. The Conference noted that the Republic of Kenya had paid its 1981 FY contributions amounting to US$28,060 to the ECA, and that the Republic of the Upper Volta had transferred, through the office of the UNDP in Ouagadougou, its own contribution amounting to US$4,067, to the account opened by the ECA in Addis Ababa. An appeal was made to the other member States to effect payment of their contributions not later than 3 months from the date of the present meeting of the Council.

C. APPOINTMENT OF THE SECRETARY-GENERAL OF THE COUNCIL (Agenda item 6)

21. The Conference of Plenipotentiaries received the report of the Technical Sub-Committee which short-listed and interviewed the applicants for the post of the Secretary General of the Council. The report of the Technical Sub-Committee is annexed to this report (Annex IX)

22. It reviewed the report and recommendations of the Technical Sub-Committee and subsequently approved the recommendation that the Zairean candidate should be offered the post of the Secretary General on the following terms: the post will carry a remuneration at P-5 level, OAU scale, and the appointment will be for three years in the first instance. The recommendation of the Sub-

Committee that the mandate of the Secretary General should be for two years was adopted but that the proposition will be the subject of necessary amendments to the Constitution which should be sumitted to the Council at its next meeting.

23. The Executive Secretary of ECA was mandated to offer firm appointment to the Secretary General designate as soon as the Council has sufficient funds in its treasury to pay the salaries of the staff and other administrative expenses for at least one year. In order to keep the work of the Council going, it was agreed that the Secretary General designate should be offered a consultancy appointment during which he will be expected to visit the countries of member States both for the purpose of sensitization and collection of contributions.

24. It was anticipated that he might be able to assume the duties of his post on permanent basis by about 1st of July 1981.

D. ELECTION OF THE GOVERNING BOARD (Agenda item 7)

ESTABLISHMENT OF THE TECHNICAL ADVISORY COMMITTEE (Agenda item 8)

25. The Council discussed these two items of the Agenda together. It was agreed that the election of the Governing Board should be deferred until such time as the membership of the Council has increased. However, it established a Technical Advisory Committee in accordance with the provisions of Article X of the Constitution.

26. Member States were urged to forward the names of their experts on the Technical Advisory Committee to both the President of the Council and the Executive Secretary of ECA.

27. The Technical Advisory Committee will be expected to function as the Preparatory Committee for the meetings of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries and to meet at least one week before the meetings of the Council. Members of the Technical Advisory Committee may then participate in the meetings of plenipotentiaries.

28. UNESCO accepted the invitation to participate in the work of the Technical Advisory Committee and its membership was subsequently approved.

VI. STATEMENT BY DONOR COUNTRIES, UNITED NATIONS AGENCIES AND AFRICAN INTERGOVERNMENTAL ORGANIZATIONS (Agenda item 9)

29. Representatives of the following donor countries, United Nations Agencies and African intergovernmental organizations made statements at the meeting.

Canada

30. The representative of Canada thanked the Bureau of the Conference, the Government of the Republic of Mali and the ECA for inviting his Government to participate in the third meeting.

31. He outlined briefly the activities of his Government in the work of the CRTO and its preparedness to participate actively in the phase II of the CRTO programme.

32. He assured the Council, on behalf of his Government, that Canadian co-operation towards the development of the African Remote Sensing programme will be continued.

UNESCO

33. The representative of UNESCO, on behalf of the Director General expressed his appreciation for the invitation extended to his organization by the Government of Mali and the secretariat of ECA to participate in the Third Meeting of the Council.

34. He praised the efforts of the ECA in creating awareness among member States of the usefulness of remote sensing technology to the exploration of natural resources and the control of the environment. He stated that UNESCO was willing to co-operate with the ARSC and to provide technical services for the Technical Advisory Committee of the Council.

France

35. The representative of France noted with satisfaction the achievements of the African Remote Sensing Council which has now set up an administrative structure which will foster the development of the ARS programme. He outlined the efforts of his Government in all the remote sensing activities of the Council, particularly its active participation in the phases I and II of the CRTO programme.

36. In appreciation of the convincing evidence of member States in forging ahead with the programme, he continued, the Government of France provided the services of a remote sensing expert to assist the ECA in its work of implementation of the ARS programme. In addition, his Government and the Government of Canada were organizing a seminar on remote sensing applications as part of the activities during the meeting of the Council.

Federal Republic of Germany

37. The representative of the Federal Republic of Germany expressed his Government's appreciation for the invitation extended to it to participate

in the third meeting and noted with satisfaction the progress made on the phase II of the CRTO programme.

38. He confirmed his Government's willingness to co-operate technically in the execution of the phase II of the programme which will involve his Government in the provision of the antenna for the Ouagadougou receiving station.

United States of America

39. The representative of the United States of America outlined briefly the activities of his Government in providing technical assistance on bilateral basis to member States and that Africa stands to gain from the launching of the LANDSAT satellite which will be received at the ground receiving and processing stations which will be established. He assured the Council of the continuing co-operation and collaboration of his Government in the laudable African Remote Sensing programme.

European Space Agency

40. The representative of the European Space Agency narrated briefly the remote sensing activities of the organization and stated that ESA was developing a European remote sensing programme - ERS-1 which would be of interest to African countries.

41. She assured the Council of ESA's continuing technical co-operation.

Liptako-Gourma

42. The representative of Liptako-Gourma outlined the role of his organization and expressed its support for the remote sensing activities of the Council.

OCLALAV

43. The representative of OCLALAV expressed his organization's gratitude for the invitation to attend the meeting and solicited the co-operation of the Council and its subsidiary organs in providing information from remote sensing to assist it in its work of pesticidal control.

African Association of Cartography

44. The Secretary-General of the AAC (African Association for Cartography) expressed the willingness of his organization to become associate member of the Council. He recalled also that according to a recommendation passed at the meeting of the chief executives of institutions established under the auspices of the ECA (Addis Ababa, December 1980) the African Remote Sensing Council should also co-operate closely with the AAC.

VII. SIGNING OF THE CONSTITUTION BY NEWLY ADHERING MEMBERS (Agenda item 10)

STATEMENTS FROM ECA MEMBER STATES PARTICIPATING IN OBSERVERS STATUS

45. The representative of Mauritania deposited his Government's instrument of accession and thus became the 19th member State of the Council.

46. Representatives of ECA member States participating in observer status made statements as summarized below:

Algeria

47. The representative of Algeria indicated that he was not mandated to sign the ARSC Constitution on behalf of his Government. He informed the Council of the establishment in his country of a national Council for remote sensing and which first decision has been to send a delegation to participate at the Third Meeting of the Conference. The report which will be made by this delegation back home will permit the National Council to make appropriate recommendations to the Government of Algeria. The Algerian delegates expressed their personal wishes for the adhesion of their country, to the African Remote Sensing Council.

Nigeria

48. The representative of the Federal Republic of Nigeria re-affirmed his Government's intensions to participate in the African remote sensing programme and that the necessary governmental action is being taken to formalize the participation by his country. The instrument of accession will be deposited with the ECA immediately the mandate to do so is received.

Rwanda

49. The representative of Rwanda stated that his Government has always been interested by the African remote sensing programme and that his participation will quicken his Government's decision in becoming a full member of the Council.

Gabon

50. The representative of Gabon declared his Government's interest in the African remote sensing programme and stated that as soon as the mandate to adhere to the Constitution is given, the government will make necessary arrangements to deposit its instrument of accession with the ECA.

VIII. ANY OTHER BUSINESS (Agenda item 11)

51. Under this item the Executive Secretary of ECA appealed to the Bureau to work out a modus operandi for sensitization of member States with a view to increasing the membership. The meeting adopted this suggestion and urged the Bureau, under the leadership of the President, to conduct such sensitization missions at diplomatic levels for effectiveness. He assured the Council of the continuing co-operation of the Economic Commission for Africa in this regard.

52. The Algerian representative suggested and was subsequently adopted, the inclusion in the report of the meeting, the summary of the recommendations and decisions so that it will be easy to follow up. He also suggested, and was adopted, that future reports of the Director/Directors-General of the Regional Remote Sensing Centres and the Regional Management Committees should form part of the documents of future meetings of the Council and that these should be forwarded in advance to participants.

IX. DATE AND VENUE OF THE MEETING OF THE CONFERENCE OF PLENIPOTENTIARIES (Agenda item 12)

53. The representative of Zaire, on behalf of his Government, offered to host the 4th meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries in Kinshasa sometimes in February 1982.

54. The dates will be fixed in consultation with the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa and should be communicated to member States thereafter.

55. The meeting took note with appreciation the kind offer made by the representative of the Government of the Republic of Niger to host the fourth meeting in case it became difficult for Zaire to do so.

X. ADOPTION OF THE REPORT (Agenda item 13)

56. The draft report was adopted after necessary amendments.

XI. CLOSURE OF THE MEETING (Agenda item 14)

57. The Third Meeting of Plenipotentiaries of the African Remote Sensing Council was closed on Thursday, 5 March 1981 by the Honourable Mr. Djibril Diallo, Minister of Transports and Public Works of the Republic of Mali and President of the Council.

58. A communique whose text is annexed to this report was issued (Annex X)

II. RECOMMENDATIONS AND DECISIONS

The Third Meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries of the African Remote Sensing Council, held in Bamako, Republic of Mali, from 3 to 5 March 1981 took the following decisions and adopted the following recommendations:

(1) That at national level all member States should establish national committees on remote sensing which will co-ordinate and develop their remote sensing activities.

(2) That, the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa in collaboration with the Bureau and the secretariat of the Council, should undertake sensitization missions to countries of member States with a view to increasing the membership of the Council and securing the moral, political and material support for the ARS programme.

(3) That the Committee of experts comprising the Directors of the Regional Centres and ECA's experts should examine the training programme of the Centres. This panel of experts should act in accordance with the terms of reference annexed to this report (Annex XI).

(4) That documents relevant to reports of the Regional Centres and the Regional Management Committees should be forwarded to all member States before the meetings of the Conference and that they should be included as an item in the agenda of future meetings of the Council.

(5) That the Government of the Republic of Egypt and the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa should pursue vigorously the matter of early regionalization of the Remote Sensing Centre, Cairo.

(6) That the ERTS-Zaire Remote Sensing Centre in Kinshasa should organize permanent training courses for member States served by it. The Conference also recommended that the secretariat of the ECA, collaborating with the Kinshasa Centre, should organize sensitization missions to the countries of member States in the Central African subregion.

(7) That, in view of the present membership being only nineteen (19) the establishment of the Governing Board should be postponed indefinitely; the Conference of Plenipotentiaries should therefore meet yearly pending the time that at least thirthy (30) signatories will be registered and at which time also it will be judicious to proceed with the election of the Governing Board.

(8) That the Technical Advisory Committee should meet one week before the meeting of the Conference of Plenipotentiaries and submit a report to the Council.

(9) That the secretariat of the Economic Commission for Africa should prepare a report on proposed amendments to the Constitution of the African Remote Sensing Council to remove ambiguity in some of the clauses entrenched in the Constitution.

(10) That the Secretary General will be appointed officially when there is enough provision of funds from member States contributions to enable the secretariat to fulfill its obligations.

(11) That the secretariat of the ECA should offer a consultancy appointment to the Secretary General designate of the ARSC. It should be possible to offer him firm appointment by about July 1981.

(12) That all signatory member States should pay up their contributions to the budget of the Council and their respective Regional Management Committees. The contributions should be made against the following account: 0-15-001-601 Chemical Bank, United Nations Branch, New York.*

(13) That, pending the time that the Nairobi Regional Remote Sensing Facility will be able to offer training both in English and French, candidates for such training from the French speaking East African countries may be accepted on relevant courses organized at the Ouagadougou Regional Remote Sensing Centre.

N.B.: * UNDP offices in the countries of member States will render assistance in transfering such contributions to the ECA.

ANNEXES

Annexe I. Report of the third session of the Regional Management Committee of CRTO

" 2. Report of the informal meeting of the Regional Management Committee of NRRSC

" 3. Opening address given by H.E. Mr Djibril Diallo, Minister of Transport and Public Works of the Republic of Mali

" 4. Statement by Professor Adebayo Adedeji, UN Under-Secretary General and Executive Secretary of the Economic Commission for Africa

" 5. Statement by H.E. Captain Kani Gaston Gnoumou, Minister of Public Works, Transports and Urbanism of the Republic of Upper-Volta

" 6. List of Participants

" 7. Report of activities of Phase I, 1977 - 1980 of CRTO

" 8. Report of the East African Regional Remote Sensing Facility

" 9. Report of the technical sub-committee on the assessment of curriculum-vitae of applicants to the post of Secretary General of the African Remote Sensing Council

" IO. Terms of reference concerning the appointment of a committee of experts

" II. Communiqué.